

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 14173 191941Z  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 14173

USDOC FOR BEWT/TPD (THOMPSON AND BEWT/TDAD  
(STECHSCHULTE)

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: BEXP, UR  
SUBJECT: COMPANY HOLDS SEMINAR OUTSIDE OF U.S.  
COMMERCIAL OFFICE BECAUSE OF SOVIET PRESSURE

REF: 77 MOSCOW 7279

1. MR. W. O'KEEFE, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF PORVAIR LIMITED, A U.K. MANUFACTURER OF IMITATION LEATHER AND 80-OWNED SUBSIDIARY OF INMONT INTERNATIONAL OF NEW YORK, CALLED AT USCO JUNE 15 TO REPORT ON RESULTS OF PORVAIR SEMINAR HELD ON PREMISES OF US/USSR TRADE AND ECONOMIC COUNCIL, JUNE 13-14. O'KEEFE WANTED TO EXPLAIN WHY, IN LIGHT OF FIRM'S SUCCESSFUL SEMINAR (BSP) IN USCO DURING NOVEMBER, 1977, THAT PORVAIR DECIDED NOT TO HOLD A SESECOND SEMINAR IN USCO. O'KEEFE SAID THAT HE HAD IN FACT SUGGESTED IDEA OF A REPEAT PERFORMANCE IN USCO TO SOVIET CO-SPONSOR, FTO SOYUZPUSHNINA, IN FEBRUARY OF THIS YEAR, BUT WAS TOLD BY FTO DEPUTY CHAIRMAN Y.A. SHIROKOV THAT IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE TO HAVE SEMINAR IN USCO BECAUSE  
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OF THE "POLITICAL CONNECTION." IF, HOWEVER, PORVAIR INSISTED ON USCO AS SITE FOR SEMINAR, SIROKOV SAID SOYUZPUSHNINA COULD NOT PROMISE A LARGE AUDIENCE -- OR EVEN MANY SOVIET PARTICIPANTS AT ALL.

2. ACCORDING TO O'KEEFE, SHIROKOV SUGGESTED THAT PORVAIR CONSIDER FIRST HOLDING SEMINAR UNDER CHAMBER

OF COMMERCE AUSPICES AT SOKOL'NIKI PARK OR IN SOVIET HOTEL. O'KEEFE SAID FIRM CHECKED OUT AND REJECTED BOTH ALTERNATIVES AS TOO EXPENSIVE AND, IN CASE OF HOTEL, TOO RISKY SINCE SOVIET HOTEL HE WANTED REFUSED TO GIVE FIRM, IRREVOCABLE BOOKINGS. O'KEEFE FINALLY CAME UP WITH US/USSR TRADE AND ECONOMIC COUNCIL AND SOVIETS -- WHO HAD NOT SUGGESTED IT AT ALL -- ACCEPTED THAT ARRANGEMENT. O'KEEFE REPORTED ATTENDANCE OF SOME 75 SOVIET SPECIALISTS -- INCLUDING FOUR PERSONS OF MINISTERIAL RANK -- DURING SEMINAR SESSIONS; ABOUT TEN MORE THAN HAD ATTENDED SEMINAR HELD IN USCO LAST NOVEMBER -- NONE OF WHOM HAD BEEN MINISTERS.

3. SALES CONTRACTS: O'KEEFE SAID, INCIDENTALLY, THAT ONE RESULT OF JUNE 13-14 SEMINAR WAS A SIGNED CONTRACT FOR \$1.4 MILLION WORTH OF PORVAIR "LEATHER" OVER AND ABOVE AMOUNT OF \$24 MILLION REPORTED REFTEL. O'KEEFE SAID THAT PORVAIR IS VERY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR FUTURE SALES OF ITS PRODUCT IN USSR AND EXPECTS TO DO ANOTHER \$2 MILLION OF BUSINESS WITH SOVIETS THIS YEAR.

4. COMMENT: THIS IS NOT FIRST TIME WE HAVE HEARD OF SOVIETS TRYING TO SHUNT BUSINESS AWAY FROM USCO IN FAVOR OF THEIR OWN EXHIBITION FACILITIES. BUT WE HAVE NOT HERETOFORE HAD HARD EVIDENCE THAT A CONFIDENTIAL

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SINGLE-FIRM EVENT HELD IN USCO WOULD HAVE STOOD A GOOD CHANCE OF BEING FROZEN OUT BY SOVIETS. IT IS SOMEWHAT INSTRUCTIVE THAT SHIROKOV DID NOT HIMSELF SUGGEST TRADE AND ECONOMIC COUNCIL PREMISES, EITHER. NONE-THELESS, O'KEEFE'S REPORT FLAGS A POSSIBLE PROBLEM AREA WHICH WE WILL BE WATCHING CLOSELY WHENEVER SINGLE-FIRM BSP'S ARE BEING PLANNED IN USCO. END COMMENT. MATLOCK

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## Message Attributes

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